

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 DHA-02 EB-07 FDRE-00 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ORM-01 OMB-01 AGR-05

TRSE-00 COME-00 FAA-00 CAB-02 IGA-01 FBO-02 A-01 PC-01

DOTE-00 /106 W

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R 230300Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 300

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1838

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EAID EAIR US CA HA

SUBJ: CLIMATE FOR RESOLVING U.S. DISPUTES WITH HAITI MAY BE IMPROVING

BEGIN SUMMARY: FEELING OF RELIEF AND APPRECIATION FOR THE
USG'S PROMPT REPSONSE TO THE DROUGHT EMERGENCY IN NORTHWEST
HAITI MAY HAVE REMINDED GOH ONCE AGAIN OF ITS UNDERLYING
INTEREST IN GETTING ALONG WITH THE U.S., EVEN WHEN CAUGHT UP
IN CURRENT ISSUES OF SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL PRIDE. WE SEE A
NUMBER OF CLUES - SOME PERHAPS INSIGNIFICANT - THAT THE
ATMOSPHERE MAY BE IMPROVING FOR THE ONWARD NEGOTIATION OF
US-HAITIAN DISPUTES OF VARIOUS KINDS. THE GOH'S PRICKLY
RELATIONS WITH CANADA ALSO SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN A FAVORABLE
TURN. END SUMMARY.

1. THE KEY FACTOR IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE FOR CONDUCT OF
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE USG AND THE GOH SEEMS TO BE OUR PROMPT
ACTION ON EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF FOR THE NORTHWEST. THIS
SITUATION WAS ANOTHER HARD REMINDER FOR THE GOH OF ITS OWN
WEAKNESS IN RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL PROBLEM AND OF ITS VERY
LIMITED ABILITY TO DEAL WITH IT. THE CURRENT HAITIAN REACTION,
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FROM DUVALIER ON DOWN, SEEMS TO REFLECT GENUINE APPRECIATION

AND RELIEF AS WELL AS A FEELING - PERHAPS CARRIED TO A DEGREE WHICH IS UNHEALTHY FOR HAITI'S SELF-RELIANCE - THAT WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN THE U.S. WILL BE HAITI'S SUREST SOURCE OF SUCCOR.

2. SOME OF THE INDICATORS WE HAVE NOTICED ARE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) IN REVERSING COMMERCE SECRETARY MURAT'S RECENT ACTION TO REMOVE THE US-OWNED TURKS AND CAICOS AIRWAYS FROM OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HAITI AIR INTER, DUVALIER MADE IT PLAIN TO THOSE CONCERNED (THERE WERE NO AMERICAN PRESENT) THAT HE WAS NOT ABOUT TO RUN UNNECESSARY RISKS WITH U.S. CIVIL AIR AUTHORITIES AND WAS THEREFORE SLOWING THE PACE OF "HAITIANIZING" THE NATION'S INTERNAL CIVIL AIR OPERATIONS UNTIL HAITI AIR INTER IS BETTER PREPARED.

(B) OUR AIDREP'S MOST RECENT PROJECT AGREEMENTS (UNDER EXISTING LOANS AND GRANTS) WITH HAITIAN MINISTRIES RECEIVED A GOOD BIT MORE MINISTERIAL ATTENTION THAN USUAL (SPEECHES AND PUBLICITY).

(C) THERE WAS A GOOD OFFICIAL TURN-OUT AT THE AMBASSADOR'S JULY 4 RECEPTION, INCLUDING SIX OUT OF THE TEN CABINET MINISTERS, AND HAITIAN MEDIA COVERAGE WAS MORE EFFUSIVE THAN LAST YEAR. AS HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE, DUVALIER SENT THE INCREASINGLY INFLUENTIAL COLONEL JEAN THOMAS, EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE ARMED FORCES, WHO HAS NOT BEEN SEEN AT ANY OF THE OTHER NATIONAL DAY RECEPTIONS CLUSTERED IN JULY.

(D) THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS SUDDENLY AGREED, WITH ALCLARITY, TO PROVIDE THE EMBASSY WITH THE PLOT OF LAND WE REQUESTED FOR OUR NEW CONSULAR BUILDING - OFFERING A 99-YEAR LEASE AT \$1 A YEAR. THIS ADMINISTRATIVE NEGOTIATION HAD BEEN DRAGGING, AND HAITIAN AUTHORITIES HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN "STAND-OFFISH."

(E) DURING OUR MOST RECENT PROBE OF GOH INTENTIONS ABOUT A POSSIBLE PEACE CORPS PROGRAM, HAITIAN MINISTERS HAVE BEEN TAKING PAINS TO SHOW THEY ARE GIVING THE IDEA SERIOUS ATTENTION - IN CONTRAST TO THE NONCOMMITTAL STANCE THE GOH HAS TAKEN ON THIS QUESTION FOR SOME TIME.

3. THE PALACE MAY ALSO HAVE TAKEN THE VIEW THAT NORTH AMERICA, INCLUDING CANADA, IS THE KEY TO HAITI'S ECONOMIC CONFIDENTIAL

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DESTINY AT A TIME WHEN HAITI'S BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS CRUNCH IS UNUSUALLY HARSH. AFTER A SERIES OF INCIDENTS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTH IN WHICH HAITIAN OFFICIALS DISPLAYED BOTH COOLNESS AND HOSTILITY TOWARD CANADIANS, PRESIDENT DUVALIER PERSONALLY TURNED UP ON DOMINION DAY (JULY 1) AND LENT THE FULL FORCE OF HIS PRESTIGE TO AN OTHERWISE ROUTINE COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY AT THE CANADIAN-HAITIAN COLLEGE (A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN PORT AU PRINCE).

4. THESE MAY BE FAVORABLE AUGURIES. WE DO NOT TAKE THEM TO SIGNIFY LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL ON DIFFICULT BILATERAL ISSUES SUCH AS TELE-HAITI, TRANSLINEAR, AND THE PORTENTS OF THE NEW LAW ON FOREIGN PROPERTY, WHERE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY IS THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM. ON THE CONTRARY, THE GOH HAS RECENTLY INTRODUCED A NEW NOTE OF CONFUSION FOR FOREIGN INVESTORS BY ABOLISHING ITS OWN INVESTMENT COMMITTEE WITHOUT MAKING IT CLEAR TO THEM WHERE THEIR PRINCIPAL POINT OF CONTACT IN THE GOH SHOULD LIE. ALL WE WISH TO NOTE HERE IS THAT, TO JUDGE FROM SOME NONE-TOO-RELIABLE SIGNS, KEY HAITIAN OFFICIALS MAY BE TELLING THEMSELVES THAT HAITI OUGHT TO MAKE AT LEAST SOME SHOW OF ACCOMMODATION TO U.S. INTERESTS, WITHIN THE LIMITS DICTATED BY FUNDAMENTAL HAITIAN INTERESTS AS THEY SEE THEM. AND THEIR BEHAVIOR SUGGEST THEY ARE FAR FROM OBLIVIOUS, IN FACT DEEPLY AFFECTED, BY THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE DROUGH EMERGENCY. ISHAM

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